Workers held on 7-8 November 2002 and also in a Tripartite Committee meeting held on 18-19 February 2003. Such steps are being taken to bring about a workable consensus for implementation of the recommendations of the Commission. However, given the procedure involved, it is not possible to specify the time limit.

Annual growth rate

†1040. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that annual growth rate of 4.4 per cent has been assessed for the year 2002-03 by the Central Statistical Organisation;

(b) whether Government agree with this assessment; and

(c) if not, Government's assessment in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) As per the Advance Estimates released by the Central Statistical Organisation, the rate of growth, measured in terms of GDP at Factor Cost (at 1993-94 prices), is estimated to be 4.4 per cent for the year 2002-03.

(b) and (c) The Central Statistical Organisation is an agency of the Government of India and is responsible for coordination of statistical activities in the country, including National Income Accounting, and evolving and maintaining statistical standards. However, the estimates undergo revision as and when the latest information becomes available.

Hiring of private professional agencies

1041. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have authorised Ministries to hire professional agencies to work out the impact assessment of big budget Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the States/UTs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.